Archeological Background Study

**Project Name:** <Enter “Project Name” from WPD I screen in ECOS>

**Highway:** <Enter “Highway” from WPD I screen in ECOS>

**District(s):** <District(s)>

**County(s):** <County(s)>

**CSJ Number(s)**: <CSJ Number(s)>

**Author and Affiliation**: <Author>

**Report Completion Date:** <Month, Day and Year>

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NOTE: When opening this template, the Table of Contents will show incorrect page numbers, but a Ctrl+Click will nevertheless take you to the desired section.

When the report is finished, right click anywhere on the Table of Contents and then click "Update Field" to get the "Update Table of Contents" dialog box. Click "Update Entire Table" and they will correct themselves.

NOTE: This template utilizes table cells and styles to assist in formatting of the report.

When the report is finished remove grey text highlighting, and the borders around the tables and cells. To remove the table borders, select the table and go to “Borders and Shading**”** and go to the “Borders Tab” and select “None” under “Setting”.

DELETE these instructions when you are finished.

Introduction

This project may require compliance both with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and with the Texas Antiquities Code. The purpose of this document is to identify risks for archeological historic properties within the project’s area of potential effects (APE). The document also considers whether any cemeteries may extend into the APE, requiring compliance with the state Health and Safety Code.

The following sections list the results of review of readily-available information for the APE’s setting and adjacent areas. The report also evaluates adjacent areas (a buffer zone; see Recommendations Section for definition of the buffer zone). The buffer zone is evaluated in case a subsequent design change expands the APE. This report concludes with separate recommendations regarding project effects and the need for additional work within shallow deposits less than three feet in depth and within Holocene-age deposits of three feet or greater depth, if such deep deposits are present.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| This background study is (check one): | [ ]  the initial study for this project |
| [ ]  a continuation of previous investigations due to design changes or other reasons Identify previous investigation(s): <enter citation(s)>If this box is checked, then answer the questions below only for the area that is affected by the design change. |

|  |
| --- |
| Area of Potential Effects |
| The APE is defined to encompass the limits of the existing right of way; proposed, new project right of way; permanent and temporary easements; and any project-specific locations and utility relocations designated by TxDOT. Note: the APE encompasses the entirety of the project area, regardless of the extent of prior archeological investigations, the particular locations subject to proposed field investigations, or the portion of a project added through a design change. If impacts are not known, worst-case impacts are assumed in defining the APE. See **Attachment 1** for a map of the APE, which is based on the project information attached as **Attachment 2**. |

|  |
| --- |
| Information Source Checklist  |
| ***(check each source of information that was consulted by the professional archeologist in preparing this background study—the number and type of sources are at the professional archeologist’s discretion)*** |
| [ ]  | Labelled USGS 7.5’ topographic quadrangle project location map (or equivalent if a 7.5’ quadrangle is unavailable) is attached and includes an inset map that depicts the county within Texas where the project occurs. |
| [ ]  | Predictive Archeological Liability Map (PALM) is attached if available *(consult TxDOT’s Environmental Compliance Toolkit).* |
| [ ]  | Geologic Atlas of Texas map is attached *(PALM may be substituted for the GAT map, if it’s available).* |
| [ ]  | Soils map is attached *(PALM may be substituted for the soils map, if it’s available)*. |
| [ ]  | FEMA flood hazard map is attached. |
| [ ]  | National Wetlands Inventory map is attached |
| [ ]  | Texas Archeological Sites Atlas map is attached, depicting any sites within one kilometer of the APE or additional APE. |
| [ ]  | Historic topographic map is attached. |
| [ ]  | Historic soils map is attached. |
| [ ]  | Historic road map is attached. |
| [ ]  | As-built plans for roadway are attached. |
| [ ]  | Other map of historic information is attached.  |
|  | Specify Map: <Enter details> |
| [ ]  | Aerial images are attached. |
| [ ]  | Project area photographs are attached. |
| Analysis of Project Setting |
| * Previously-Identified Archeological Sites
 |
| [ ]  | No archeological sites have been identified within the APE or within 150 feet of the APE |
| [ ]  | Archeological sites have been identified within the APE or within 150 feet of the APE  |
|  | <Reference any applicable figure(s). Provide additional comments as necessary to support this analysis; may be left blank.> |
| * Previously–Identified Cemeteries
 |
| [ ]  | No known cemetery sites occur within the APE or within 150 feet of the APE. |
| [ ]  | Cemeteries occur within the APE or within 150 feet of the APE.  |
|  | < Reference any applicable figure(s). Provide additional comments as necessary to support this analysis; may be left blank. > |
| * Holocene-Age Deposits
 |
| [ ]  | No Holocene-age deposits occur within or adjacent to the APE. |
| [ ]  | Holocene-age deposits occur within or adjacent to the APE.  |
|  | < Reference any applicable figure(s). Provide additional comments as necessary to support this analysis; may be left blank.> |
| * Historically-Reliable Water Sources
 |
| [ ]  | No historically-reliable water sources occur within 500 feet of the APE. |
| [ ]  | Historically-reliable water sources occur within 500 feet of the APE, or this question can’t be answered confidently.  |
|  | < Reference any applicable figure(s). Provide additional comments as necessary to support this analysis; may be left blank.> |
| * Wetlands and Frequently-Flooded Areas
 |
| [ ]  | The APE and adjacent areas contain wetlands or frequently-flooded areas. |
| [ ]  | The APE and adjacent areas do not contain wetlands or frequently-flooded areas, or this question cannot be answered confidently. |
|  | < Reference any applicable figure(s). Provide additional comments as necessary to support this analysis; may be left blank.> |
| * Preferred Landforms for Occupation
 |
| [ ]  | The Atlas map or other information shows that the APE does not contain landforms on which human settlement or occupation typically occurred.  |
|  | < Reference any applicable figure(s). Provide additional comments as necessary to support this analysis; may be left blank.> |
| [ ]  | The Atlas map or other information shows that the APE does contain landforms on which human settlement or occupation typically occurred, or this issue was not resolved with the available information.  |
|  | < Reference any applicable figure(s). Provide additional comments as necessary to support this analysis; may be left blank.> |
| * Prior Disturbances
 |
| Settings that are favorable for human occupation have been subject to the following previous disturbances *(check all that apply).* |
| [ ]  | Previous road construction and maintenance. |
| [ ]  | Installations of utilities. |
| [ ]  | Modern land use practices like plowing, grade modifications, brush clearing, and tree removal, |
| [ ]  | Industrial, commercial, urban and/or suburban development |
| [ ]  | Erosion and scouring by natural causes. |
| [ ]  | Other (identify) |
|  | < Reference any applicable figure(s). Provide additional comments as necessary to support this analysis; may be left blank.> |
| [ ]  | NO PRIOR DISTURBANCES OR UNKNOWN (do not check any foregoing disturbances) |
| * Previous Archeological Surveys
 |
| [ ]  | The majority of the settings with high potential for archeological sites within or adjacent to the APE have been previously surveyed.  |
|  | < Reference any applicable figure(s). Provide additional comments as necessary to support this analysis; may be left blank.> |
| [ ]  | The majority of the settings with high potential for archeological sites within or adjacent to the APE have not been previously surveyed.  |
| Conclusions |
| * Results of Previous Investigations
 |
| [ ]  | Previous surveys have covered a sufficient proportion of the APE or adjacent areas to conclude that the APE and adjacent areas are unlikely to contain archeological sites or cemeteries. |
| [ ]  | Previous surveys have not covered a sufficient proportion of the APE or adjacent areas to draw inferences regarding the presence of archeological sites and cemeteries, or previous surveys show that archeological sites and/or cemeteries are present within the APE. |
| * APE Integrity (Prehistoric Sites)
 |
| The APE contains no deposits with sufficient integrity that prehistoric archeological sites would have the potential to address important questions. Any such sites would lack integrity of *(check all that apply):* |
| [ ]  | Location |
| [ ]  | Design |
| [ ]  | Materials |
| [ ]  | Association |
| [ ]  | Other (*identify*)  |
|  | <Enter additional aspects of integrity as applicable and explain> |
| [ ]  | THE APE HAS THE POTENTIAL TO PRESERVE SITES WITH SUFFICIENT INTEGRITY TO QUALIFY THOSE SITES FOR INCLUSION IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES *(if true, do not check any of the forgoing aspects of integrity)* |
| * APE Integrity (Historic-Age Sites)
 |
| The APE contains no deposits with sufficient integrity that historic-age archeological sites would have the potential to address important questions. Any such sites would lack integrity of *(check all that apply)*: |
| [ ]  | Location |
| [ ]  | Design |
| [ ]  | Materials |
| [ ]  | Association |
| [ ]  | Other (*identify*) |
|  | <Enter additional aspects of integrity as applicable and explain> |
| [ ]  | THE APE HAS THE POTENTIAL TO PRESERVE SITES WITH SUFFICIENT INTEGRITY TO QUALIFY THOSE SITES FOR INCLUSION IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES *(if true, do not check any of the forgoing aspects of integrity)* |
| * Results of Historic Map Research (Historic Age Sites)
 |
| [ ]  | Historic map research shows that historic-era archeological deposits are not likely to occur within or adjacent to the APE |
| [ ]  | Historic map research shows that historic-era archeological deposits could occur within or adjacent to the APE; this research was inconclusive; or this research was not completed because it was not necessary to reach justifiable conclusions. |
| * Results of Map Research (Cemeteries)
 |
| [ ]  | Map research shows that cemeteries are not likely to occur within or adjacent to the APE. |
| [ ]  | Map research shows that cemeteries could occur within or adjacent to the APE, or this research was inconclusive. |
| * Results of Landform Study
 |
| [ ]  | The APE and adjacent areas occur in a setting that was not conducive to human occupation and activity |
| [ ]  | The APE and adjacent areas occur in a setting that was conducive to human occupation and activity; research on this issue was inconclusive; or this research was not completed because it was not necessary to reach justifiable conclusions. |
| Recommendations |
| * Shallow Deposits

*Evaluate the potential for shallow deposits (Holocene-age deposits less than three-feet in depth) within the APE to contain archeological historic properties and cemeteries. Make appropriate recommendations regarding the need for further work, including the need for shovel test pits, auger probes, or other methods for evaluating shallow deposits.* |
|  | <Enter evaluations and recommendations> |
| * Deep Deposits

*Evaluation of deep deposits (Holocene-age deposits of three feet or greater depth) may or may not be necessary, depending on the nature of the sediments within the APE and the depth of proposed impacts. If Holocene-age deposits extend to three feet or more within the APE and would be impacted by the project, make appropriate recommendations regarding the need for further work. If no deep, Holocene-age deposits occur within the APE note that they are absent and indicate that no additional work in needed. If the deep Holocene deposits are present but the project either would not affect them or they have been too extensively disturbed to hold intact archeological deposits, provide an appropriate justification that no additional work is needed.* |
|  | <Enter evaluations and recommendations> |
| * Recommendations Summary (select only one check box)
 |
| [ ]  No further study needed | [ ]  Survey of entire APE | [ ]  Variable, see attached figure |
| * Results Valid Within

*The purpose of considering adjacent areas is to define, when possible, a buffer zone around the APE to which findings of no effect and recommendations for no further work can be extended. No additional investigation should be necessary if a subsequent design change expands the APE into the buffer zone. In some cases, however, no buffer zone may be reasonably defined for the project or portions of the project as expansion of the APE may warrant survey. In such cases, check the middle box and indicate that the results are valid within zero feet of the APE.* |
| [ ]  50 feet of APE | [ ]  <00> feet of APE | [ ]  Variable, see attached figure |
| * The Definition and Evaluation of this Horizontal Buffer Zone is Based on One or More of the Following Considerations
 |
| [ ]  | The integrity of the areas within and adjacent to the setting is affected by prior development. |
| [ ]  | Previous investigations show that archeological materials are unlikely to exist in this area. |
| [ ]  | Adjacent areas have potential to preserve archeological sites with good integrity. |
| [ ]  | Other (specify) |
|  | <Enter other factors used to define the horizontal buffer> |
| Findings of no effect to archeological historic properties and/or State Antiquities Landmarks and recommendations for no further work apply to all areas within the horizontal buffer zone, as specified in the previous section. Any design change within this study area would not require further action or review beyond those actions recommended in this study. Design changes that either extend beyond the buffer zone or result in potential impacts deeper than the impacts considered in this report would require additional review. Note that no buffer zone may be defined for some projects, based on local conditions.  |

References Cited

<Identify the specific information sources used to conduct this background study. Use a single standard style. Be consistent in citing references.>

Attachments

Attachment 1 – Map showing horizontal extent of APE, including existing ROW and proposed ROW/new easements

*<If this study is a continuation of previous investigations due to design changes or other reasons, or if it is being done in connection with a reevaluation of a previously cleared project, identify on* ***Attachment 1*** *the part of the APE that is the subject of this study. Delete this text before finalizing this study.>*

Attachment 2– Project information

*<If this study is being done prior to environmental clearance of the project (regardless of whether it is the initial study or a continuation of previous investigations), then attach a screen capture of the WPD I screen in ECOS. Before making the screen capture, make sure that you expand the all sections on WPD I by clicking the “+” symbol in the upper left-hand corner. To make the screen capture, click “Print this Page,” and then either print to pdf, or an actual printer to make a hard copy and scan.*

***IMPORTANT NOTE:*** *By attaching a screen capture of the WPD I screen in ECOS to this report, you are confirming that the WPD I screen contains a project description and that the WPD I project description is the description of the project upon which this background study is based. If there is any discrepancy between the description of the project upon which this background study is based and the WPD I project description, such discrepancy must be resolved before the WPD I screen is attached to this report and this report is submitted to TxDOT for review.*

*If this study is being done in connection with a reevaluation of a previously cleared project, then attach a description of the changes that triggered a reevaluation as provided by the project sponsor. Delete this text before finalizing this study.>*

Attachment 3 - <enter name of specific information source>

*<Repeat for each specific information source relied upon in conducting this study, so that each source is listed as its own, separate attachment. Delete this text before finalizing this study.>*

This report was written on behalf of the Texas Department of Transportation by:

*<If this report was prepared by a consultant, the consultant enters its logo or other identifying information here Delete this text before finalizing this study.*

*If this report was prepared by TxDOT personnel, omit this page from the report.>*